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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/721,508	11/22/2000	John Wallace Parce	01-000461US	5229

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EXAMINER

TRAN, MY CHAU T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1639

DATE MAILED: 09/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/721,508	Applicant(s) PARCE ET AL.	
	Examiner MY-CHAU T. TRAN	Art Unit 1639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 75-90 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 75-90 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 07 October 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/26/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Application and Claims Status

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after a decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but before the filing of a Notice of Appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit or the commencement of a civil action. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 07/26/2005 has been entered.
2. Applicant's amendment and response filed 07/26/2005 is acknowledged and entered. Claims 78 and 87 have been amended.
3. Claims 91-107 were cancelled by the amendment filed on 10/14/2003.
4. Claims 91-107 were added by the amendment filed on 10/28/2002 and 12/18/2002.
5. Claims 1-74 were cancelled and Claims 75-90 were added by the preliminary amendment filed on 11/22/2000.
6. Claims 75-90 are pending.

Priority

7. This instant application is a CON of 09/346,660 filed 07/01/1999, which is now Patent 6,558,944 and is CON of 08/671,987 filed 06/28/1996, which is now Patent 5,942,443. This instant application is granted the benefit of priority for both 09/346,660 and 08/671,987 under 35 U.S.C 120.

Information Disclosure Statement

8. The information disclosure statement (IDS) filed on 07/26/2005 has been reviewed, and its references have been considered as noted on PTO-1449 form.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

10. Claim 75 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ramsey (US Patent 6,001,229: *filing date of 08/01/1994*).

The instant invention recites an apparatus for conducting a microfluidic process. The apparatus comprises (a) a first plate comprising an array of sample access ports, and (b) a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks of cavity structures and channels for conducting a microfluidic process.

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The access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample containers and dispensing said samples. This limitation is interpreted as the functional limitation of the access ports.

The second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed samples. This limitation is interpreted as the functional limitation of the second plate.

Ramsey discloses an apparatus and the method of using the apparatus (see e.g. Abstract; col. 1, lines 12-19; col. 2, lines 14-34). The apparatus comprises a base plate (refers to instant claimed second plate), and a cover plate (refers to instant claimed first plate)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 13-36; col. 9, lines 39-46; fig. 1, ref. # 22 and 28 respectively; fig. 12). The reservoirs (see e.g. fig. 1, ref. # 30, 32, 34, and 36; fig. 12, ref. # 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, and 84) are affixed to the base plate with the cover plate in between (refers to instant claimed limitation of ‘*second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed samples*’)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 31-35). The reservoirs are in communications with end portions of corresponding channels and these end portions (refers to the claimed access ports) acts as y”ports” through which materials moves between the reservoirs to various channels (refers to instant claimed limitation of ‘*access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample containers and dispensing said samples*’)(see e.g. col. 5, lines 51-56). The base plate comprises pattern channels (refers to instant claimed microfluidic networks)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 24-30, and 48-53; fig. 1, ref. # 24, 48, 50, 52, and 54; fig. 12, ref. # 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, and 72). The reservoirs are introduced into the channels by injection mode (see e.g. col. 5, lines 20-36; col. 9, lines 47-60). Therefore, the apparatus of Ramsey anticipates the presently claimed invention.

11. Claims 76-81 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ramsey (US Patent 6,001,229; filing date of 08/01/1994).

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The instant invention recites an apparatus for conducting a microfluidic process. The apparatus comprises (a) a first plate comprising an array of sample access ports, and (b) a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks of cavity structures and channels for conducting a microfluidic process.

The access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample wells. This limitation is interpreted as the functional limitation of the access ports.

The second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed samples. This limitation is interpreted as the functional limitation of the second plate.

Each of the microfluidic networks is adapted for fluid communication with a corresponding sample access port of said first plate.

Ramsey discloses an apparatus and the method of using the apparatus (see e.g. Abstract; col. 1, lines 12-19; col. 2, lines 14-34). The apparatus comprises a base plate (refers to instant claimed second plate), and a cover plate (refers to instant claimed first plate)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 13-36; col. 9, lines 39-46; fig. 1, ref. # 22 and 28 respectively; fig. 12). The reservoirs (refers to instant claimed sample wells)(see e.g. fig. 1, ref. # 30, 32, 34, and 36; fig. 12, ref. # 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, and 84) are affixed to the base plate with the cover plate in between (refers to instant claimed limitation of '*second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed samples*')(see e.g. col. 4, lines 31-35). The reservoirs are in communications with end portions of corresponding channels and these ends portions (refers to the claimed access ports) acts as y"ports" through which materials moves between the reservoirs to various channels (refers to instant claimed limitation of '*access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample wells*', and claims 77 and 78)(see e.g. col. 5, lines 51-56). The reservoirs include a sample reservoir, a buffer reservoir, and a waste reservoir (refers to instant claims 79 and 80)(see e.g. col. 5, lines 20-24; col. 9, lines 39-60). The base plate comprises pattern channels (refers to instant claimed microfluidic networks, and instant claim 81)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 24-30, and 48-53; fig. 1, ref. # 24, 48, 50, 52, and 54; fig. 12, ref. # 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, and

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72). The samples from the reservoirs are introduced into the channels by injection mode (refers to instant claimed limitation of '*Each of the microfluidic networks is adapted for fluid communication with a corresponding sample access port of said first plate*')(see e.g. col. 5, lines 20-36; col. 9, lines 47-60). Therefore, the apparatus of Ramsey anticipates the presently claimed invention.

12. Claims 83-90 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ramsey (US Patent 6,001,229; filing date of 08/01/1994).

The instant invention recites a method for processing an array of samples. The method comprises the steps of a) simultaneously transferring at least a portion of each sample in an array of sample wells to a corresponding array of sample access ports that are part of a first plate, (b) simultaneously transferring at least a portion of each sample from said sample access ports to a corresponding array of microfluidic networks that is a part of a second plate integral with said first plate, and (c) processing said array of samples.

The first plate comprising an array of sample access ports adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample wells.

The second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks of cavity structures and channels for conducting a microfluidic process wherein each of said microfluidic networks is adapted for fluid communication with a corresponding sample access port.

Ramsey discloses an apparatus and the method of using the apparatus (see e.g. Abstract; col. 1, lines 12-19; col. 2, lines 14-34). The apparatus comprises a base plate (refers to instant claimed second plate), and a cover plate (refers to instant claimed first plate)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 13-36; col. 9, lines 39-46; fig. 1, ref. # 22 and 28 respectively; fig. 12). The reservoirs (refers to instant claimed sample wells)(see e.g. fig. 1, ref. # 30, 32, 34, and 36; fig. 12, ref. # 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, and 84) are affixed to the base plate with the cover plate in between (refers to instant claimed limitation of '*second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed*

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samples')(see e.g. col. 4, lines 31-35). The reservoirs are in communications with end portions of corresponding channels and these ends portions (refers to the claimed access ports) acts as y"ports" through which materials moves between the reservoirs to various channels (refers to instant claimed limitation of '*access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample wells*', and claims 86 and 87)(see e.g. col. 5, lines 51-56). The reservoirs include a sample reservoir, a buffer reservoir, and a waste reservoir (refers to instant claims 88 and 89)(see e.g. col. 5, lines 20-24; col. 9, lines 39-60). The base plate comprises pattern channels (refers to instant claimed microfluidic networks, and instant claim 90)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 24-30, and 48-53; fig. 1, ref. # 24, 48, 50, 52, and 54; fig. 12, ref. # 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, and 72). The samples from the reservoirs are introduced into the channels by injection mode (refers to instant claimed limitation of '*Each of the microfluidic networks is adapted for fluid communication with a corresponding sample access port of said first plate*')(see e.g. col. 5, lines 20-36; col. 9, lines 47-60).

The method comprises the steps of actively controlling an electric potential simultaneously at each port to transport the materials from the reservoirs to the channels (refers to instant claimed step (a) and (b)), applying a potential to produce a gradient such that the materials are separated into isolated components, directing the isolated components to the reagent channel wherein the reagents and the isolated components react to form a detectable species (refers to instant claimed step (c), and instant claims 84 and 85)(see e.g. col. 13, lines 4-12; col. 15, lines 14-48; col. 17, line 61 thru col. 18, line 39; claims 14-16).

Therefore, the apparatus and method of Ramsey anticipates the presently claimed invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

14. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

15. Claim 82 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ramsey (US Patent 6,001,229; filing date of 08/01/1994) and Foster et al. (US Patent 4,444,879).

The instant invention recites a kit. The kit comprises (a) the apparatus, and, (b) reagents, other than reagents within said apparatus, for processing a sample.

The apparatus comprises (a) a first plate comprising an array of sample access ports, and (b) a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks of cavity structures and channels for conducting a microfluidic process.

The access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample containers and dispensing said samples. This limitation is interpreted as the functional limitation of the access ports.

The second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed samples. This limitation is interpreted as the functional limitation of the second plate.

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Ramsey discloses an apparatus and the method of using the apparatus (see e.g. Abstract; col. 1, lines 12-19; col. 2, lines 14-34). The apparatus comprises a base plate (refers to instant claimed second plate), and a cover plate (refers to instant claimed first plate)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 13-36; col. 9, lines 39-46; fig. 1, ref. # 22 and 28 respectively; fig. 12). The reservoirs (see e.g. fig. 1, ref. # 30, 32, 34, and 36; fig. 12, ref. # 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, and 84) are affixed to the base plate with the cover plate in between (refers to instant claimed limitation of *'second plate is integral with said first plate for receiving said dispensed samples'*)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 31-35). The reservoirs are in communications with end portions of corresponding channels and these ends portions (refers to the claimed access ports) acts as y"ports" through which materials moves between the reservoirs to various channels (refers to instant claimed limitation of *'access ports are adapted for receiving a plurality of samples from an array of sample containers and dispensing said samples'*)(see e.g. col. 5, lines 51-56). The base plate comprises pattern channels (refers to instant claimed microfluidic networks)(see e.g. col. 4, lines 24-30, and 48-53; fig. 1, ref. # 24, 48, 50, 52, and 54; fig. 12, ref. # 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, and 72). The reservoirs are introduced into the channels by injection mode (see e.g. col. 5, lines 20-36; col. 9, lines 47-60).

The apparatus of Ramsey differs from the presently claimed invention by failing to disclose packaging the apparatus in a kit format with reagents.

Foster et al. disclose method and apparatus for immunoassays (see e.g. Abstract; col. 1, lines 8-11). The apparatus packaged in a kit format (figure 6; col. 15, lines 14-29). The kit comprises containers for the components such as reagents that are use for performing the assay method.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made by disclosing packaging the apparatus in a kit format with reagents as taught by Foster et al. in the apparatus of Ramsey. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to disclose packaging the apparatus in a kit format with reagents in the apparatus of Ramsey for the advantage of providing an automated bioanalytical device to be use in an environment other than the laboratory. Furthermore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have a reasonable expectation of success in packaging the device of Ramsey in a kit format with reagents because Ramsey suggested that the apparatus can perform wet chemical experiments that use to be perform on the bench, i.e. the apparatus can be use in an environment other than the laboratory (Ramsey: col. 2, lines 30-34).

Double Patenting

16. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

17. Claim 75 is rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 5, and 6 of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470. Although

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the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470 has overlapping scope since the device of the instant application is generic to the device of the presently claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470, or in other words, claim 75 is anticipated by claims 1, 5, and 6 of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470. Specifically, the structural features of both devices are a first plate comprising an array of sample access port (refers to the second substrate of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470), and a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks (refers to the first substrate of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470). Thus, the examined claims would have been obvious over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 5,885,470.

18. Claims 75-78 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 4, and 5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2 has overlapping scope since the device of the instant application is generic to the device of the presently claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2, or in other words, claims 75-78 anticipated by claims 1, 4, and 5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2. Specifically, the structural features of both devices are a first plate comprising an array of sample access port (refers to the pipettor element of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2), a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks (refers to the body structure of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2), and array of sample wells (refers to the collection of sample source of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2). Thus, the examined claims would have been obvious over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2.

19. Claims 75-77 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 16, and 17 of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1 has overlapping scope since the device of the instant application is generic to the device of the presently claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1, or in other words, claims 75-77 anticipated by claims 1, 16, and 17 of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1. Specifically, the structural features of both devices are a first plate comprising an array of sample access port (refers to the ports on the second layer and third layer of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1), a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks (refers to the first layer of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1), and array of sample wells (refers to the ports on the second layer of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1). Thus, the examined claims would have been obvious over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1.

20. Claims 83, 84, and 86 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 16, 17, and 18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1 has overlapping scope since the device of the instant application is generic to the device of the presently claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1, or in other words, claims 83, 84, and 86 anticipated by claims 1, 16, 17, and 18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1. Specifically, the method steps of both method are the steps of placing the fluid sample in the first port (refers to instant claimed step

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(a)), transporting the sample through the channel networks (refers to instant claimed step (b)), and detecting the results of the reaction through the channel network (refers to instant claimed step (c), and instant claim 84). The structural features of both devices are a first plate comprising an array of sample access port (refers to the pipettor element of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2), a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks (refers to the body structure of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2), and array of sample wells (refers to the collection of sample source of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,364 B2). Thus, the examined claims would have been obvious over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,167,910 B1.

21. Claims 75-78 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 13-18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1 has overlapping scope since the device of the instant application is generic to the device of the presently claimed device of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1, or in other words, claims 75-78 anticipated by claims 1 and 13-18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1. Specifically, the structural features of both devices are a first plate comprising an array of sample access port (refers to the cover layer and apertures of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1), a second plate comprising a planar array of microfluidic networks (refers to the body structure of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1), and array of sample wells (refers to the reservoir of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1). Thus, the examined claims would have been obvious over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,343 B1.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to My-Chau T. Tran whose telephone number is 571-272-0810. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday: 8:00-2:30; Tuesday-Thursday: 7:30-5:00; Friday: 8:00-3:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew J. Wang can be reached on 571-272-0811. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

mct
September 2, 2005



ANDREW WANG
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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BRUCE M. KISLIUK
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